

Chaurice (Thurs.)

~~F~~

A

09054. add. 5.

LETTER,

ADDRESSED TO THE

HONOURABLE COURT OF DIRECTORS

OF THE

East-India Company,

CONTAINING

P R O P O S A L S

FOR PRINTING A

H I S T O R Y

OF THE

R E V O L U T I O N S

OF THE

EMPIRE OF INDOSTAN,

FROM THE EARLIEST AGES TO THE PRESENT:

With a Sketch of the Plan on which the Work will be conducted; a concise Account of the Authors who will principally be consulted; and a short Retrospect of its GENERAL HISTORY.

L O N D O N :

Printed for the AUTHOR; and sold by W. RICHARDSON, under the
ROYAL EXCHANGE, where SUBSCRIPTIONS for
the PROPOSED HISTORY are received.

M,DCC,XC,

I. E. T. E. R.

MONUMENTS AND DIRECT

East India Company

P. R. O. T. O. S. A. L. S.

H. I. S. T. O. R. Y.



EMPIRE OF INDIA

With a description of the various monuments and inscriptions which have been discovered in the various parts of the Empire of India, and a list of the various monuments and inscriptions which have been discovered in the various parts of the Empire of India.

LONDON

Printed by W. R. CHADWICK, at the British Museum, London.

1853

T O

WILLIAM DEVAYNES, Esq. *Chairman,*
STEPHEN LUSHINGTON, Esq. *Deputy-Chairman,*

FRANCIS BARING, Esq.

WILLIAM BENSLEY, Esq.

Honourable WILLIAM ELPHINSTONE,

THOMAS FITZHUGH, Esq.

JOHN HUNTER, Esq.

HUGH INGLIS, Esq.

PAUL LE MESURIER, Esq.

JOHN MANSHIP, Esq.

THOMAS THEOPHILUS METCALFE, Esq.

CHARLES MILLS, Esq.

JAMES MOFFATT, Esq.

WILLIAM MONEY, Esq.

THOMAS PARRY, Esq.

THOMAS PATTLE, Esq.

ABRAHAM ROBARTS, Esq.

DAVID SCOTT, Esq.

NATHANIEL SMITH, Esq.

JOHN SMITH, Esq.

JOSEPH SPARKES, Esq.

GEORGE TATEM, Esq.

JOHN TRAVERS, Esq.

JOHN WOODHOUSE, Esq.

DIRECTORS *for managing the affairs of the*
Honourable United Company of Merchants
of England, trading to the East-Indies—

ADVERTISEMENT.

TO prevent misconception, the author begs leave, in this place, to renew the solemn assurance, which, in the following pages, he has repeatedly made: —
“ That nothing dictated by party considerations shall find its way into the proposed history; but that, equally in the latter as in the former part of the work, it is his fixed resolution religiously to adhere to the grand outlines of historical truth, which can only be obtained by a diligent investigation of the most authentic publications on the subject, and by collecting the dispassionate opinions of the candid, the moderate, and the discerning, on either side of the question.”

HONOURABLE SIRs,

THERE was a period, and that not very remote from the present, when it was urged, to the discredit of the first commercial company in the world, that, with the increase of their power and the extent of their dominions in *India*, a proportionate progress was by no means made, in the knowledge of the internal history, the antiquities, and the peculiar rites, civil and religious, of the country. Whether this reflection was ever justly founded or not, it were useless to enquire; and it would, at the same time, ill become him, who solicits the patronage of your honourable court, to arraign the conduct, or dispute the wisdom, of their predecessors in office. The truth of History, however, compels me to declare, that, in the early part of this century, little genuine or substantial information, on these subjects, was acquired; and few attempts were made to extend enquiry beyond the limited precincts of your own settlements.

The same indifference seemed, at that period, to prevail in regard to the governors as the governed. The history, the manners, the policy, of the successive Mahomedan usurpers of India, were alike unknown. The very name of the Great Mogul seemed to carry with it somewhat that inspired awe and apprehension. The vast and well-

B

disciplined

disciplined armies he was said to be able to bring into the field, the infinite resources of his power, and the splendor and magnificence of the imperial court of Delhi, dazzled and terrified the inhabitants of the distant European settlements into a veneration of his authority, little inferior to that of the tributary millions who crouched beneath the scepter of despotism. Even when that court was rent with the violence of contending factions, amidst that dreadful scene of anarchy which prevailed from the death of Aurangzeb till the invasion of the Persian Monarch, when a few turbulent and aspiring Omras disposed, at their will, of the property and the lives of four successive Sovereigns of the House of Timur, curiosity slumbered, and the British Genius, in Asia, busied itself in speculations far less honourable than those that concern the history of arts and the decline of empires. Little more was known of the enervate Mahommed than of his martial ancestors; while the genuine code of *Brama remained equally unexplored with the sublime institutes of the great founder of the Mogul dynasty.

Various important and unexpected circumstances, however, soon conspired to excite, in the highest degree, that curiosity, and to elevate that genius to nobler considerations. A rapid succession of events, too near to be overlooked, and too important to your very existence in India to be viewed with indifference, quickly called into action the dormant faculties of the mind; and, from unconcerned spectators, induced the English to become themselves conspicuous actors on the theatre of Indostan. An ambitious and

* It is hardly necessary to inform the reader, that the "Code of Gentoo Laws" has been translated by Mr. Halhed, and the "Institutes of Timur" by the very learned and ingenious Dr. White.

formidable rival, whose aim seemed to be your extermination from the continent of Asia, roused luxurious indolence from supine inactivity, and broke the golden slumbers of commercial opulence. The necessity which existed for active and immediate war, and the operations of that war which engaged us in a more immediate intercourse with the internal provinces of the empire, effectually contributed towards the extensions of those arts, which are more properly the pursuit and the ornament of peace. To secure more firmly the conquests, acquired in a short series of years by a train of such rapid and astonishing successes, and more efficaciously to promote the commerce which we have, in consequence of those successes, been enabled to establish, the history, religion, manners, and language, of the Indians, were minutely investigated; and, from that period, notwithstanding our original neglect, the English, beyond all the other powers connected with Indostan, have exhibited to the world (as far as they have had an opportunity of examining their annals and the sacred repositories of their laws and religion) the most authentic reports of their history, the most faithful expositions of their legal and religious institutions, and the most accurate delineation of their national character and manners.

Voltaire himself, who wrote upon all subjects dogmatically, and on most superficially; that Voltaire, who, in many instances, refused the just portion of credit and applause due to the most celebrated writers of this nation*, even that cavilling and supercilious genius, in a treatise, which he published concerning Indian affairs, voluntarily paid this tribute to the laborious researches of English ingenuity in India:

* I allude particularly to his gross misrepresentations and illiberal abuse of Shakespeare and Milton.

“ We confess, with regret, that, in endeavouring to arrive at the knowledge of the true history of this nation, its government, religion, and manners, we have obtained no assistance from the compilations of our French authors. Neither those writers, who have transcribed fables for the booksellers, nor our missionaries, nor our voyagers, have ever informed us of *the truth*.” “ In a sincere desire of discovering that truth, and of being somewhat useful, we thought we could not better ascertain the present state of India, than by referring ourselves to Mr. Holwell, who resided so long in Bengal ; and who not only understood the language of the country, but likewise that of the antient Bramins ; by consulting Mr. Dow, who has related the revolutions of which he was a witness ; and especially by giving credit to the testimony of that brave officer, Mr. Scrafton, who joins to sincerity the love of letters, &c.”

The first of those events before alluded to, as contributing towards a more just conception of the powers of India, and a more familiar acquaintance with those powers, both native and foreign, was the irruption from Persia, in 1738, described with such accuracy by Mr. Frazer, and with such elegance by the pen of Sir William Jones. An irruption, dreadful in its progress and fatal in its consequences, that, like a deluge, broke down all the barriers of the established constitution, and spread desolation and ruin at once over the natural and political aspect of Indostan. When Nadir Shah, invited by those dissensions which had shaken the foundations of the Tartarian grandeur in India, and animated by a desire of plundering the richest empire in the world, poured into her fertile bosom his hardy and veteran legions ; when, with the active and indefatigable spirit of the first Mahomedan invaders of India, that
intrepid

intrepid barbarian (as he is styled by Mr. Orme) cut his way through the numerous tribes of Afghans, that defended the mountains on its frontiers, and displayed the victorious banners of Persia on the plains of Karnal, it was then seen how little vigour and wisdom remained to direct the councils of this mighty empire ; of how little avail are numbers, without an experienced commander ; and how contemptible is the most ostentatious parade of majesty, without virtue to dignify, and energy to support, it. The dreadful convulsions that shook the capital, where, as in the days of Timur, every thing was, for a time, resigned to unrestrained pillage and massacre, extended their effects to the remotest quarters of the empire. Disdaining longer to obey the phantom of royalty at Delhi, the viceroys, in the distant provinces, by degrees became independent of the Crown ; and, without disputing the hereditary claims, or pretending to deny the authority, paid not the least respect to the commands, of the Emperors.

First in military fame, and most powerful of them all, from the importance of his station, as viceroy of the Decan, comprehending the fourth part of that vast empire, Nizam al Muluch erected the standard of independence. Venerable from his great age and long experience, though detestable for the principles that actuated his mind, this veteran had early learned to conquer under the banners of the great Aurengzeb ; and, from that politic inflexible hero, had imbibed a knowledge of the true maxims on which the Mahomedan government, in India, *ought* to have been conducted, and the exact discipline that *ought* to have prevailed among their troops. He knew that they were exposed to all the various temptations of a luxurious and enervating climate ; a climate, that had often proved fatal to

former conquerors of the mussulman faith, and had witnessed the glory and extinction of the illustrious dynasties of Gazna, Gaur, and Charasm. He knew that they were destined, not only to *preserve entire* to themselves those conquests, which it had cost the toil of three centuries to acquire and establish, but to *defend* them against those, who, incited by the same lust of wealth and goaded by the same stings of ambition, might be led to make similar attempts. These principles, in themselves so evident, so congenial to the practice of the most celebrated Emperors, the considerate Souba had long laboured to inculcate at the court of Delhi. He beheld, with a mixture of sorrow and indignation, the neglect of those sound original institutes, which characterized the antient system of government; he had marked, with horror, the outrages committed on the person of majesty, since the death of his master; he had felt, in a temporary seclusion from his Souba, the grasping, enormous, power of one party; and had, in personal insults offered to himself at Delhi, experienced the brutal insolence of another. The natural and daring ambition of his own mind; the consciousness of his own great influence and abilities; an inviolable respect for the memory of that renowned warrior, with whom he had toiled up the steep of military fame; triumphant pride, excited by the recollection of his past important services to the state, and fermenting rage, resulting from the injurious treatment he had sustained from the sycophants of the court, kindled, in the mind of the Souba, a conflict so terrible, as nothing less than the subversion of the government could appease. When that subversion was accomplished, by a train of dark conspiracies, which it will be my province hereafter to develope; and
when

when the aspiring Nizam, with revenge sufficiently gratified, had retired to his government, the darling project, which his ambition had formed, of making himself independant in the Decan, and the accomplishment of which had only waited the completion of his vengeance, broke forth at once to the full view of the empire. Not all the efforts of perfidious negotiation, the chief spring of government in Eastern courts, nor all the menaces of a power, which he now derided, could prevail upon the hoary traitor to quit the Decan, or once more intrust himself in the snares and expose himself to the dangers of a court. During the remainder of the reign of the unfortunate Mahommed, and on the commencement of the short but more vigorous one of his son Hamed, he continued to govern with all the ensigns of imperial sway, except the diadem; and had a fuller treasury, and a better army at his command, even than the Emperor himself. Many now living can well remember the more than kingly pomp and magnificence, with which this self-created sovereign, in the year 1743, at the head of an army, consisting of 80,000 horse, and 200,000 foot, marched from Golconda to settle the distracted affairs of the Carnatic, "deigning hardly a smile on the European governors, who anxiously solicited his favour; and scarcely honouring, with a look, the rich presents laid, with all imaginary humility, at his feet*."

The death of Nizam al Muluck, which happened in 1748, was the signal to cry "havoc, and let loose the

* See a letter from M. Buffy to Mr. Dupleix, quoted in the introduction to Cambridge's War in India.

dogs of war" upon the most fertile and best regulated region in Indostan. It was, however, the distractions which raged in his own family, and proved so fatal to his posterity, that first lighted the baleful torch, from which the flame of discord diffused itself over the continent of India. The absence of Gazi-o-din Khan, the right heir at Delhi, who, in his sublime post of general of the army, and, in fact, intrusted with the command of the whole empire, thought any immediate attention to his hereditary claims beneath his care;—the presumption of Nazirjing, the second son, in seizing on the vacant government, and on the treasures of his father, the sinews of that government; the ambitious pretensions of his favourite grandson, Murzafajing, in opposition to the claims of his usurping uncle—all these circumstances afforded ample scope for the operations of the deep-laid policy of our Gallic rivals; and, in a short time, matured the daring projects of a Duplex and a Lally. Deep-laid and sanguinary as that policy was, it soon displayed itself, in a manner at once the most unprecedented and alarming, and with effects that filled all Asia with apprehension, and all Europe with astonishment. * * * * *

But the interesting events, produced through the whole peninsula of Indostan, by the defection of this formidable usurper, will more properly be detailed hereafter. My design in this address was to have developed the plan of an *intended* history, and I have prematurely plunged into the body of that history itself.

The WORK, GENTLEMEN, for which, with equal respect and diffidence, I solicit the honour of your protection,

tedition, is, A HISTORY OF THE REVOLUTIONS THAT HAVE BEFALLEN THE INDIAN EMPIRE, from the earliest periods on record, down to the present day: in the course of which undertaking, whatever more particularly deserving notice the laborious diligence of the most antient writers has collected, and exhibited to the world, shall be inserted and compared with those productions, which are the result of the not less laborious, but more successful, efforts of the most modern. The undertaking is, I confess, an arduous one, and the accomplishment of it, in a manner deserving your favour, can only be effected by unabated diligence and by unwearied exertion. Extensive and important as this work must, in its nature and its consequences, prove, I have yet, in the sincere desire of making it more generally useful to persons connected with India, endeavoured to compress this body of historical information within the most moderate limits of printing and expence: extensive and important indeed! as it comprehends many of the most celebrated events, and is connected with the history of the most illustrious characters of Asia. With the momentous weight of such a work my mind is deeply impressed; of its particular necessity I have been repeatedly informed; and, of its general utility, (permit me to say,) I have the most unshaken conviction.

Independent of your particular interest in whatever concerns your eastern possessions, the subject itself has long continued to excite the public curiosity. *India*, or rather *INDOSTAN*, is a country more distinguished by the vicissitudes it has undergone, and more remarkable for the
peculiarity

peculiarity of its inhabitants and productions, than any other on the face of the habitable globe. Its natural history and aspect strongly partake of the same predominant feature of singularity. The grandeur and extent of its two celebrated rivers, which, after diffusing verdure and plenty through many rich and powerful kingdoms, fall into the ocean, at the distance of four hundred leagues from each other : the stupendous height of those mountains, by which, as an everlasting barrier, it is on three sides girded, and of which another mighty ridge extends quite across, from North to South, causing an agreeable variety of climate, and exhibiting, on its opposite extremities, the surprizing phænomenon of two seasons at one period ; the luxuriant beauty and fertility of its plains ; the fragrance of its aromatic woods ; the delicious flavour of its fruits ; the immense treasures daily poured forth from its subterraneous regions, and the rich variety of its manufactures ; have rendered India, from the remotest ages of antiquity, equally the wonder of the curious and the delight of the voluptuous ; the object of contemplation to the philosopher, and too frequently of rapacity to the unrelenting fury of the soldier.

By the History of the Revolutions of Indostan, I must be understood, principally, to mean those which have befallen the Imperial Throne of Indostan ; for, though the history of the subordinate provinces, once so many separate and powerful kingdoms, will, by no means, be totally neglected, yet it cannot be supposed, that, within so small a compass as that which I have prescribed to myself, any very minute particulars can be given of transactions, not intimately connected with the enlarged view of its general history.

history. That I *have* circumscribed my narration within those narrow limits has been in conformity to the opinion of many judicious authors, and in particular to that of Sir W. Jones, whose short history of the Persian Empire, prefixed to that of Nadir Shah, accurately exemplifies his own remark, "that, of distant ages and remote countries, the records in our possession can hardly fail of being often erroneous; that, therefore, it is the duty of a wise historian, to catch the general and striking features of truth, and to confine himself to those great and notorious events, in which the genuine and incontestible part of all history consists."

Of the method of arrangement adopted by me, and the authors consulted in the progress of the work, the following short sketch will afford the best explanation:

An Introductory Dissertation, confined solely to an investigation of the geography, religion, laws, literature, and commerce, of ancient India, and contrasted with the most authentic statements on that subject, as given by authors of a recent date, will, in the first volume, precede the commencement of the history itself. The reader will there find the accounts of Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and Pliny, compared with those of Holwell, Dow, Halhed, Cambridge, Orme, Scrafton, Hamilton, and the ingenious Raynal, who borrows freely from all the others without the frankness of Voltaire to acknowledge the obligation. At the present improved period of our knowledge in regard to that country, and after the general change which has taken place through all its limits, to give numerous abstracts from Thevenot, Bernier, Tavernier,

(the

(the usual sources of information,) and the other writers of the last century, however, in particular instances, they may deserve respectful notice, would be an useless waste of my own time and that of my readers. Those authors, however, as well as our English travellers of that period, Sir Thomas Roe, with his chaplain, Terry, Sir Thomas Herbert, Lord, and some others, to be met with in the voluminous collections of Churchill, Harris, and that published from Lord Oxford's manuscripts, will be of great and important use, when we shall have descended to those later ages, and be engaged in recapitulating the history of those emperors, whom they respectively visited. Many of these, however credible, when they relate facts, of which they were themselves eye-witnesses, and however accurate, when they portray the manners of the Mahomedan usurpers of India, (a subject which I shall reserve as an introduction to a subsequent volume,) when treating of the religious and civil institutions of the Indians themselves, have heaped together such a mass of absurd fictions as have tended greatly to injure the pure and sublime theology of Brama in the eyes of Europeans, and to give us the most perverted notions of their noble and exalted system of jurisprudence.

But, to the writers above enumerated, who, with unabated ardour of investigation on the spot, acquired an intimate knowledge of this subject, we may, with pride and confidence, appeal—to Mr. Holwell, who resided thirty years in Bengal, and many of those years in the distinguished station of governor of Calcutta, which afforded him ample opportunities of cultivating his favourite study, the Hindoo language

language and religion—a study that induced him to purchase, at a high expence, “ two very correct and valuable copies of the *Gentoo Shastahs, afterwards unfortunately lost in the plunder of that city; a circumstance not the least to be lamented among the disasters which beset that miserable place, in 1756, which his own pen so pathetically describes, *et quorum pars magna fuit*—to Mr. Dow, who, notwithstanding the palpable and unpardonable terror, pointed out in his Dissertation, by a more recent and diligent explorer of Indian antiquities, possessed, according to the candid confession of his modest censurer, great and acknowledged merit in this line of literature. —to Mr. Halhed, to whom the united voice of India and Britain has decreed the palm; who, amidst the violence of contending parties, is holden in the highest respect by both; or rather of whom it may be said, with more truth, than the line was originally applied:

That factions strive which shall applaud him most:

—to Mr. Cambridge, eminently skilled to manage either the pen or the sword,—to Mr. Orme, an historian of equal

* There seems to be considerable difference of opinion, on this subject, between Holwell and Dow. The former asserts, that there are both a Vedam and a Shastah, considered as the only sacred Oracles of India: that the book first named is followed by the Gentoos of the Malabar and Coromandel coast; the latter, by those of Bengal, and all the natives of Indostan, or India proper; and he thinks the Vedam a corruption of the Shastah. Dow, on the other hand, asserts, that there are various Shastahs; that the Shastah, a word signifying knowledge, is a commentary on the sacred books of the Bedas, of which there are four; and that Vedam is a corruption of Beda, or Bedang; the only hallowed Repository of the Religion of Brama.

† Compare Dow, vol. I. page 30, with Halhed, page 31.

elegance

elegance and authenticity, whose prefatory essays, prefixed to his history, both on Indian and Mahomedan manners, every reader of taste ardently wishes had been prolonged to a greater extent,—to Mr. Scrafton, who, though severely censured by Mr. Holwell, and with apparent justice, for having copied from his manuscripts, seen in India, to the amount of nineteen pages, without the least acknowledgment; yet, like the person to whose writings he was indebted, has many new and excellent remarks of his own;—and, last in order of this arrangement, but first in the order of publication, to Mr. Hamilton, who, without elegance of method, or correctness of style, but adhering steadily to truth, with the honest bluntness of a sailor, has indulged the public with a most lively, entertaining, and instructive, narrative of the manners of the natives, on the whole coast of the peninsula; a coast which, in pursuit of professional fame and advantage, he constantly ranged, as he informs us himself, for six and thirty years; and who, from the Gulph of Cambay to the Mouths of the Ganges, has given us a most accurate and faithful account of the foundings of the ocean, and the bearings of the land, of its rocks and shoals, its bays and promontories, its numerous nations, and varied commerce.*

In conformity to the same rule, when endeavouring to give the reader an idea of the Geography of India, antient, oriental, and modern, after an attentive retrospect to the map of Ptolemy, and the descriptions of other antient

* It would be the height of ingratitude, not to mention here that great pillar of oriental learning, Mr. Richardson, of the Middle Temple, whose unequalled efforts, to promote its advancement, *deserve* and *have* the warmest tribute of applause from all admirers of Asiatic literature.

geographers,

geographers, after exhibiting the divisions of Indostan, as stated in the Ayenee Acbaree, and the short sketch of Sir W. Jones, in his geographical survey of Asia, taken, as he informs us, from Abulfeda and Ulug Beg, instead of guiding myself by the uncertain and obsolete maps of those travellers, I have immediately directed my own, and my readers attention, to that most wonderful proof of indefatigable exertion and transcendant abilities, the intelligent memoir, and very accurate map of Indostan, lately presented to the world by Major Rennel, whose unwearied efforts to elucidate her intricate geography, must secure him the applause of all those, who are either interested in the commerce, or attached to the literature, of the East. To this map, which precludes all other similar attempts, I shall constantly refer the inquisitive reader, as to an unerring guide; for, it comprehends all the excellencies, without the defects, of those of D'Anville, Orme, and others of great reputation. When the current of history shall carry us, for a short interval, beyond the limits of Indostan, into the neighbouring kingdoms of Asia, I recommend the maps, given with M. De le Croix's History of Timurbec; which, in the opinion of Jones, are the best maps of Asia extant, or were when that judgement was given. This, however, is an assertion that could not have been made, had the pressure of professional engagements allowed his own pen to have completed that intended map of Asia, for which a table of latitudes and longitudes were prepared by him, when in England; for the communication of which, in India, Major Rennel confesses his obligations; and which, probably, with returning
leisure,

leisure, may yet receive the finishing stroke from the hand of the able designer.

As M. Petit Le Croix, the son, by the translation of the sublime Persian History of Sherifeddin, above-mentioned, and by the accurate maps that accompanied it, greatly enlarged the limits of oriental knowledge and geography, so M. Petit Le Croix, the father, had not a little contributed to the same end, by his previous compilation, from oriental authors, of the History of the great Gengiscan, the first Tartarian Emperor and Prototype of Timur. This work he undertook at the request of that renowned statesman, M. Colbert, who made the encouragement and reward of literature, especially of the Asiatic kind, a principal object of his administration; and it cost the author, we are informed, the labour of ten years to prepare it for the eye of his patron and the public. It entirely consists of extracts, from the most celebrated historians and geographers of Asia; from Fadlallah, a native of Humadan, in Persia, Vizier of Gazan Khan, Emperor of the Mogul Tartars; from Mirkhond, Condemir, two Persian historians of the highest repute, father and son, and sometimes confounded together, Abulfarajius, Abulfeda, Ulug Beg, &c. and the reader will, perhaps, easily pardon a short occasional abstract from that work, (as well as from the History of the Tartars, by Abulghazi Bahader, Khan of Khowarazm, a work, which, when Le Croix wrote, was not imported into Europe,) to elucidate the obscure geography of those countries that once gave law to India. Of Abulfarajius I shall have occasion to speak presently; but, of Abulfeda and Ulug Beg, as I have

have already mentioned them, and as, by the means of Mr. Greaves and Mr. Gagnier, the editors and Latin translators of part of their respective works, I shall be hereafter more particularly obliged to those writers, a concise account of them may not be unacceptable, as it certainly is not unconnected with an Asiatic History.

Ismael Abulfeda, Prince of Hamah, a city in Syria, flourished in the fourteenth century, and was the author of many valuable compositions in history, jurisprudence, and philosophy; but particularly of a Treatise on Geography, in Arabic, highly celebrated by the learned both of Asia and Europe. The enumeration of his titles, (as given by Le Roque, in the preface to his translation of his Arabia,) in English, is as follows: the Sultan, assisted by God, the Support of Religion, the Father of Redemption, Ismael, the Son of the most excellent King, Light of the Faith, Ali, Son of Mahmud, Beauty of Islamism, Son of Omar, Son of Shahinshah, Son of Ayoub, Sovereign of Hamah. These honourable distinctions and genealogical titles, however useful, and even sometimes necessary in Eastern histories, to distinguish the families and characters of illustrious men, (as is evident, in the present instance, from Mr. Sale's correction of a mistake in the Dictionary of Mr. Bayle, who has confounded our author with a King of Egypt, of the same name,*) it is, by no means, my intention generally to recapitulate in the proposed work; and never, or at least, in very few instances, in the oriental orthography. By this means the error committed in the first edition of Ferishta, and confessed by the editor in the

* See General Dictionary, in the article Abulfeda.

second, will be avoided ; where the page is crouded with the usefess display of proper names and titles, as given in the original Persian, which must constantly appear harsh and uncouth to an English reader. Abulfeda might, with some degree of truth, be styled, the Support of Religion ; for, in honour of that religion, he deviates from the common practice of Geographers, and makes Arabia his first climate ; because, he tells us, that country was rendered more sacred than others by the birth of Mahomet, and by the venerable Temples of Mecca and Modina. This geographical treatise is a judicious abstract of whatever the best oriental authors have written upon the subject ; above sixty of whom, as we are informed by Mr. Greaves, are quoted in the course of his voluminous work. It is divided into tables, and has this extraordinary recommendation, that it gives the true pronounciation of the names of the cities and towns, together with their longitude and latitude ; it exhibits, likewise, the names of the authors from whose work the account of each city is taken ; and, while it distinguishes the province in which it is situated, is enriched with a description of that province ; not indeed extensive, but instructive and authentic. Mr. Greaves, at that time Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford, in the year 1650, published, in the original Arabic, with a Latin version subjoined, “ Abulfeda’s Description of Khowarazm (Charasm) and Mawaralnahr (Transoxiana,)” kingdoms whose names were, before that period, almost unknown in Europe, but which gave birth to those mighty conquerors of the Tartar race, whose arms spread terror through Asia and Europe ; and who, in their imperial city of Samarcand, reigned with a splendor and magnificence unequalled

unequalled in the most splendid æras of antient Persia. Mr. Greaves, likewise, left behind him a Latin translation of Abulfeda's Arabia, which was afterwards inserted, together with the original, by Mr. Gagnier, in the third volume of Dr. Hudson's "*Geographiæ veteris scriptores Græci Minores.*" Another Latin version of the same work was made by M. Le Croix, which was an unnecessary exertion of his great Asiatic learning; but he knew not, at the time, that Greave had already completed one. That of Le Roque, above-mentioned, had the benefit of both publications; and it is spoken of, by Mr. Gagnier, with honour, in his very celebrated preface to Abulfeda's Life of Mahommed. The example, which Mr. Greaves had set the learned, excited Mr. Gagnier, who afterwards filled the Arabic professor's chair, to issue proposals for publishing, by subscription, the complete work of Abulfeda. In this great and laudable undertaking, however, from want of proper encouragement, he failed; and thus that rich mine of Asiatic geography remains still unexplored, except by those skilled in the languages of the East. The failure is much to be lamented, as Mr. Gagnier informs us he was to have had the benefit of the correcting hand of his successor in the same chair, the late ingenious and learned Dr. Hunt.

Ulug Beg, the son of Shahroc, and grandson of Timur, one of the greatest monarchs, and most celebrated astronomers of the East, succeeded to the empire, established by his illustrious ancestor, in the early part of the fifteenth century, at the time when that empire flourished in the meridian of its glory. He had already, with equal spirit and prudence, for a long series of years, governed the extensive hereditary dominions allotted to his father by

Timur, in the partition of his vast empire ; and had not only in himself cultivated, but patronized in others, the polite and liberal sciences. Mathematics and Astronomy were, however, his favourite study ; and it is more than probable, that a considerable portion of the work that now bears his name was composed and arranged before his accession to the Imperial Throne, on which he sat only a few, and some of those, from the discords that prevailed in the royal family, unhappy, years. The extension of his dominion seemed principally applied, by this princely philosopher, towards enlarging the boundaries of science. To this end, having summoned to Samarcand, his metropolis, from all parts of the world, those who were most skilful in the arts he loved, and having provided them with the most perfect instruments known in that age, he observed, in company with this illustrious assemblage of scholars, the phenomena of the heavens with the utmost accuracy ; and, from observations then taken, formed the astronomical tables, sanctioned by his name, so celebrated over all the Eastern world, and called the Royal Ephemerides. He erected, on this occasion, a noble observatory ; and, among a number of curious and uncommon instruments, a quadrant was constructed, of such dimensions as are hardly conceivable ; for, Mr. Greaves, who published a part of this work, informs us in his preface, that, when he was at Constantinople, he was assured, by some Turkish astronomers of eminence and credibility, “ *Ulug Begium præter alia instrumenta exactissima, quæ paraverat, Quadrantem stupendæ molis construxisse, cujus radius altitudinem summæ fornicis templi Sanctæ Sophiæ adequaret :*” i. e. that Ulug Beg, besides other most exact instruments, had constructed a quadrant,

of

of such a stupendous magnitude, that its radius, in length, equalled the height of the dome of St. Sophia. Whatever exaggeration there might have been in this report, Mr. Greaves observes, that very large instruments were absolutely necessary to take the height of the pole, with such accuracy as he had done at Samarcand; for he makes it $39^{\circ} 37' 23''$, whence we may refer his great precision in the rest of his observations. This book of the astronomical observations of Ulug Beg is, according to M. Le Croix, divided into four parts; the first treats of chronological history; the second, of geography, and the rising and setting of the stars in each country; the third, of the situation or position of the planets, of their longitudes and latitudes, and of all that is curious in the art of Astronomy; the fourth shews the motions of the stars. Of these the chronological part was presented to the public, in 1650, by the learned and indefatigable Greaves, under the title of "*Epochæ Celebriores*," and inserted afterwards in the "*Scriptores* Greci Minores*;" the geographical tables, together with those of the celebrated Persian geographer, Nassir Eddin, appeared about the same period; and the tables of the longitude and latitude of the fixed stars were published at Oxford by Dr. Hyde.

With respect to the body of THIS HISTORY itself, which it is my zealous wish to make generally instructive and entertaining, I profess to give, in the course of it, the substance of Mr. Dow's translation of the History of Indostan, by Ferishta; at the same time, I shall be eager to embrace every collateral aid which other authors, high in

* This work is now grown so scarce and valuable, that the four volumes, which are small octavos, sell for as many guineas.

credit and character, may afford, to render that writer more acceptable and intelligible to the public. Some chasms in that history will, by this means, be filled up; and the whole of what is valuable and worth preserving, in regard to the general traits of Indian history, will be presented, in one comprehensive and connected view, before the eye of the reader. After paying that just respect, which is due to the earlier historians of classical antiquity, even when treating of ages somewhat involved in fabulous obscurity; after having displayed the romantic exploits, related by those historians, of the Indian Bacchus and Hercules, and pointed out what degree of credibility may be due to the exaggerated accounts of the invasions of the Egyptian Sesostris and the Assyrian Semiramis, we shall endeavour to discover how far the Persians penetrated into a country, which they, for ages, boasted to have subdued, and rendered tributary to that enormous empire, which they once possessed in Asia. This review will naturally lead us, in the next place, to a consideration of the history of the very early, or, as they are called by Mr. Dow, the fabulous, ages of the Hindoos; as that history stands extracted by Ferishta from the antient historical poem, written in the original Sanscrit, and translated into Persian by Abul Fazil, in the reign of Sultan Acbar. This Indian chronicle bears the title of Mahabarit, or the great war; and throughout seems to favour the idea of a most intimate connection subsisting between the two countries, if not of a general dependence of the Indian monarchy on that of Persia. Mirkhond's Persian History, as abridged by Texeira, a learned Spaniard, will, on this occasion, be consulted; and from that book, as well as some other oriental publications, shall

shall be extracted whatever, in the remotest degree, may tend to elucidate that obscure and dubious path of history.

Emerging from this gloom of mystery and fable, we shall again tread on classic ground; and, taking Arrian and Curtius for our conductors, present the Hero of Macedon, with his determined Greeks, after trampling on the ruins of the Persian empire, bending their toilsome march down the precipices of Caucasus, or rather of Paropamisus, a part of the Caucasus, towards the banks of the Indus. We shall exhibit the mighty Phoor, or Porus, towering above the rival princes of India, as well in the gigantic stature of his body as the comprehensive faculties of his mind, with "an army, numerous as the locusts," issuing from his imperial capital, to give battle to the invader. We shall endeavour to ascertain where that capital was situated; whether it was Delhi, as asserted by Dow; Lahore, as intimated by Jones; or Chitor, as is supposed by Herbert.—Chitor, that stupendous monument of the grandeur and independence of the antient Indian Rajas, crowded, according to Terry, who saw its majestic ruins in 1615, with stately pagodas and beautiful palaces; statues and columns, exquisitely wrought, magnificent gates, and vast reservoirs, then mouldering in decay; with 100,000 stone houses, totally uninhabited, except by storks and owls, and enclosed with a strong wall, ten miles in circumference. Assisted by the Memoir of Mr. Rennel, who has diligently attended, and distinctly marked, the progress of the three great Indian invaders, we shall trace his progress over the Penjab, or country of fine rivers; pause with him on the

eastern banks of the Hyphasis, or Setledge, the boundary of his incursion eastward, and then, sailing down the rapid Indus, explore the rich and numerous cities that antiently adorned its banks. It is here necessary to observe, that so fond were the Greeks of giving new names of their own invention and language to the countries they conquered, great and almost insurmountable difficulties have arisen to the moderns in their endeavours to fix the exact geographical site of the antient cities of India; and indeed to such a length did they carry this singular practice, that Sir William Jones remarks, that *Por*, or *Porus*, is almost the only Asiatic word they have not corrupted. Mr. Rennel, by diligent and accurate investigation, such as few have had industry or opportunity to enter into, has removed those obstructions with which Grecian arrogance has clouded the subject; and I hope, chiefly by the aid of his memoir, to be able to give a more clear and satisfactory account of the route observed by this irresistible conqueror, than has hitherto appeared, or, indeed, without that aid, could have been given. For the detail of the circumstances of this irruption, the reader must principally be obliged to the Greek historians, as few traces are to be found of it in any oriental publication yet presented to the public; the very short sketch in *Ferishta*, and a curious account of a conversation which Mr. Hamilton had with a bramin of some learning on the subject of the magician * *Hafander's* (Alexander) invasion of India, and battle with king *Porus*,

* See Hamilton's *New Account of the East Indies*, vol. I, page 23. London, 1744.

being all the information of an Indian historical kind, relative to this event, in our possession. Mr. Frazer, indeed, in his catalogue of oriental MSS. added to his Nadir Shah, mentions two bearing the name of "Se-cander Nama;" but, as he has given us no extracts from either, we are in the dark about their contents. It is exceedingly to be lamented, that a writer so well informed as Mr. Frazer was, in the history and literature of Asia, should not have devoted more of his leisure to a subject, for the complete elucidation of which he was so eminently qualified. This work, as well as other historical efforts of a similar nature by men, who, like myself, have no claim to applause but on the score of fidelity and diligence, would then have been rendered unnecessary, and the public been in possession of intelligence from the fountain-head of oriental learning.

From the death of Alexander till the commencement of the Hegira, or Mahomedan æra, in the seventh century, the path of Indian history is gloomy, cheerless, treacherous, and unconnected. We are possessed of no authentic documents to guide, and few important incidents to vary, the uninteresting narrative. We shall trace, however, some vestiges of antient fortitude and independence in the daring and successful efforts of Sandrocottus, the Sinsarchund of Ferishta, to shake off the Macedonian yoke, or rather that of Seleucus, the successor of Alexander, in his Syrian conquests; but we shall still be compelled to acknowledge, notwithstanding the vigorous and effectual opposition of Sandrocottus, that, in the time of Antiochus the Great, India was not entirely independent of the power of the Seleucidæ, since we are informed by Polybius,

bis, that this monarch exacted a tribute of elephants from Saphogafinus, its king, who seems to have been the Jona* of Ferishtā, or one of his posterity, who, about that period, (two centuries before the Christian æra,) sat on the imperial throne of India. Dark and barren as this portion of the work must necessarily be, I shall endeavour, from various fragments relative to India in the history of these Seleucidæ, and that of the Ptolemies in Egypt; from the annals of Persia, and the other neighbouring nations; from the scanty glimmerings of information scattered through the pages of the Roman history, both of the eastern and western empire; to connect the chain of events, and retain, unextinguished, the spirit that ought to animate every historical composition. After this long interval of doubt and obscurity, the scene grows gradually more clear and luminous. The clouds that darkened the historical page vanish before the rising beams of Mahomedan glory. Urged on by the sanguinary precepts of the Coran and the same insatiable ambition that distinguished its author, fired with the love of military glory, and impatient for the honourable title of Gazi †, we see the heroes of the Arabian superstition successively pour their armies into the desolated plains of India. Filled, as we must be, with ardent admiration at the invincible fortitude with which, in pursuit of those objects, they surmounted difficul-

* This Jona is said to have been a grand nephew of Porus. Compare Dow, Vol. I. page 10, with Justin, lib. 15. cap. 4. And again, Dow, p. 11, with Polybius, lib. xi. p. 651.

† "Gazi signifies a man who carries on a religious war," (as we understand the word crusader). See Abulgazi Khan's Hist. of the Tartars, Vol I. p. 252. The illustrious author's name is a proof of his own remark.

ties almost insuperable, and, at the same time, fired, as we ought to be, with indignation, excited by nature and Christianity, at their intolerant and destructive principles, we see them penetrate, with equal ease, the snows of Caucasus and the deserts of Thibet.* Descending thence, more terrible than all the inundations of her Ganges, we behold those remorseless marauders plundering her pagodas, sanctioned by the devotion, and rich with the accumulated wealth, of ages; mutilating her idols, venerable from the remotest antiquity; driving her rajas from their fortresses, before deemed impregnable; and laying the noble capitals of Canouge and Delhi in ruins. The reader will please to bear constantly in memory, that, in thus stigmatizing the rapacious and sanguinary proceedings of the Mahomedans, I wish to be understood of the more early invaders of India; for, the immediate descendants of Timur were, in general, distinguished by the mildness of their laws, and the justice with which they ruled. In this more luminous and crowded series of our history, I mean from the tenth to the fourteenth century of the Christian æra, it is my intention to adhere very strictly, though not servilely, to the text of Ferishta, because it is undoubtedly the most valuable and authentic part of his work, and throws very considerable light on the history of the Gaznavide, the Gaurian, and Charasmian dynasties. There is likewise another eastern author, to whose learned and celebrated performance this work will be deeply indebted; I mean the history of the Arabian dynasties, translated from Abul-

* The route of Sultan Mahmud, on his expedition to Canouge, lay through Tibet, (Dow) that of Timur over the Indian Caucasus. (Le Croix's Timur Bec.)

farajius by Dr. Pocock, that great eastern traveller and scholar, whom, Mr. Sale says, "no European has hitherto excelled, if equalled, in the knowledge of the Arabic tongue and writers." As I shall have frequent occasion to quote this author, as well as the celebrated history of the Tartars by Abulgazi Bahader, for the purpose of illustrating a period of history and a portion of geography very little known to those who have not made the Asiatic histories their particular study, I must once more, Gentlemen, solicit your patience to this short account of one of its most illustrious ornaments.

Gregorius Abulfarajius, a native of Syria, and bishop of Aleppo, flourished in the 13th century, and published an historical work in Arabic, which Mr. Bayle says may justly be called an epitome of universal history, from the creation to his own time. It consists of ten parts, and is divided into dynasties. Dr. Pocock published this work in 1663, with a Latin version, and a large supplement, containing a compendious sequel of that history with respect to the succession of the princes of the east. Mr. Bayle speaks in the highest terms of praise concerning that part which relates to the transactions of the Saracens and Mogul Tartars, and from that part principally will our extracts be made. This great historian was a singular advocate for judicial astrology; and, if we may believe his own assertion, an uncommon instance of the truth of it; for, he affirmed, that he was born when Jupiter and Saturn were in conjunction in the sign of Aquarius; that twenty years after they were again in conjunction in Libra when he was made a bishop; that after twenty other years, these planets being in conjunction in Gemini, he was promoted

to

to the dignity of primate, and after the space of another twenty years, they being once more in conjunction in Aquarius, he thought that the year of his death was arrived, and, according to the fatal presage, in that very year his life terminated, and he met death with chearfulness and alacrity.

Before we enter more particularly on that part of the Tartarian history, which is so intimately connected with that of India, (a period the most brilliant, and crouded with great events of any in the Mahomedan æra,) it will also be necessary, that we should turn our attention, for a short time, to the genealogical history of that nation, written in the Mogul language by Abulgazi Khan abovementioned, who was at once a descendant of the illustrious race whose actions he celebrates, and a powerful sovereign over a great portion of the country which his pen so accurately describes. "It is no novelty, says his editor, in the east, to find kings among their authors, and the book before us is an instance of two, the father and the son, both Khans of Charasim." The former began, the latter finished, it. Their immediate descendants at present bear imperial sway in their native country. The work itself is the only original of the kind of which we are in possession, and the mode of its introduction into Europe is not less curious than the book introduced. The manuscript was bought, about the close of the last century, by some Swedish officers, prisoners in Siberia, of a Tartar merchant who traded to Tobolski, and those officers, whose zeal for literature entitled them to a better fate, caused it to be translated into the Russian, and other languages of Europe.

The

The Royal author, in the course of the work, acquaints us with his reasons for commencing so laborious a work, " which he affirms to be the scarcity of genuine information on the subject; that no Khan, before himself, had taken the trouble to acquire the necessary materials, and much less to arrange them in historical order; that those materials had been chiefly collected from Fadlallah (whom he styles Khoja Rashid) and seventeen other respectable Mogul historians; and that his ardour, in the prosecution of it, was such, that, when labouring under a severe illness, (that severe illness which, in the end, proved fatal to him,) he continued, in the intervals of his disorder, to dictate to four secretaries, who attended for the purpose." This history is divided into nine parts, from the particular veneration which the Tartars are said to entertain for that number. The two first contain the history of the Moguls and Tartars, with an account of all their tribes, from Turk, the first founder of their nation, down to Gengis Khan; the third relates the life and actions of that great conqueror; the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth, treat of his four sons, and their successors, in the various quarters of his vast empire; and the ninth contains a particular history of the Khans, our author's predecessors, who reigned over Charasm, from its first Uzbek conqueror, Shah Bakht, to the death of Abulgazi himself, in A. D. 1663.

With the assistance of this author; of the history of the dynasties, by Abulfarajius, particularly the ninth and tenth; and Pocock's Supplement to those dynasties; with the additional aid of Erpenius's less correct version of Elmacinus, or Al Makin; of the History of Gengis Khan,
and

and Sheriffeddin's Timur Bec, published by the Le Croix, father and son, above-mentioned; constantly compared, as we proceed, with *Ferishta's Indian History*, I hope to be able to give a more complete and connected narration of the events of the middle centuries than has yet perhaps been exhibited, in one production, to the eye of the public. Still farther to illustrate this luminous period of Tartar and Indian history (for they are about this æra inseparably blended) I shall call frequently to my aid that rich mine of oriental science and history, *Le Bibliotheque Oriental* of M. D. Herbelot, the learned Ockley's *History of the Saracens*, and the still more laborious researches of the authors of the *Arab History*, as given in the three first volumes of the *Modern Universal History*, which was principally collected from manuscripts in the Bodleian library, and those of Dr. Hunt, late Professor of Hebrew and Arabic, at Oxford, and is by far the most valuable portion of that voluminous work.

However eminently useful in illustrating the history, the work of Abulgazi will be still more serviceable in elucidating the geography of a country so little known, even to the literati of Europe, as Khowarazm, or Chorasmi. It was, however, in the twelfth century, the principal kingdom of a mighty empire, and its capital of the same name, now called Urgens, was the imperial residence of a dynasty of Kings, highly celebrated in Asiatic history, of whom the last was Gelaeddin, whose dauntless bravery, displayed at the river Indus, filled Gengiscan himself, his determined enemy, with admiration. It was the Chorasmiæ of Ptolemy and Herodotus; and from this region issued that formidable band of warriors,
mentioned

mentioned by the historians of the crusades, under the name of Chorasmians, who gave the Christians in the holy land, about 1242, that tremendous blow, from the shock of which they never afterwards could recover. By a comparison of this book with the Chorasmia of Abulfeda, as published by Greaves, that perfect idea can alone be formed of its situation and division, which is so necessary to the right understanding of its history. Of Gengis Khan, the account given by Abulgazi is ample, satisfactory, and will be of important service; but that given of Timur is by no means satisfactory; nor can we wonder, when it is considered, that the inflexible conqueror, enraged at its resistance, razed its metropolis to the ground, sowed it with barley, to prevent its again becoming formidable, and inflicted many unexampled severities on the princes, our author's progenitors.

I have dwelt longer, Gentlemen, on this particular portion of my intended history, because I am impressed with an anxious solicitude to render it more peculiarly worthy your notice. The history of those warlike tribes, that, from the North of Asia, as from an exhaustless hive, have swarmed over half the kingdoms of Europe and Asia, and usurped the thrones of many of their most powerful monarchs, has been too long buried in silence and obscurity. Engaged in more interesting pursuits, and wandering in more flowery and beaten paths, the man of polished manners and science turns, with cold and averted look, from the bleak mountainous regions of Scythia, and falsely imagines its history as barren as the country. Arguing upon mistaken premises, and deluded by partial and unjust representations, he considers the whole race,
both

both of Tartars and Arabs, as a generation of fierce and intractable barbarians, destitute of arts and culture, the decided enemies of all science, and the remorseless destroyers of all its records. But, on this subject, let us hear a writer, well known and justly patronized by your honourable court: Mr. Richardson, in language equally forcible and animated, declares, that “ in the eighth, ninth, and succeeding centuries, when the European world was clouded with barbarity and ignorance; when sovereign princes and great feudal lords could neither write nor read, the Arabians rivalled the Romans of the Augustan age in erudition and genius; whilst, with a more extensive empire*, they excelled them in magnificence, and in the more refined splendor and elegance of life. The Khalifs Al Modhi, Al Rashid, Al Mamoun, and other monarchs of the illustrious House of Al Abbas, were men of learning, genius, and politeness; learning and genius were found, therefore, the surest avenues to royal favour; they were of consequence universally cultivated; princes, generals, and vizirs, being not only magnificent patrons of literary merit, but holding themselves a conspicuous rank among writers of the most distinguished class.”

That zeal for the encouragement of learning, which animated the Arabian princes, continued to glow, with almost equal fervor, in the breasts of the Tartar monarchs, their conquerors and successors, in these parts of Asia.

* “ The great empires of the Mogul, of Persia, of the Turks, of Morocco, besides many powerful kingdoms, have been founded on the ruins of the wide-extended dominions of these Khalifs; which, at one time, comprehended Arabia, Chaldea, Assyria, Media, Persia, Chorassan, Samarcand, Bokhara, Cabul, Candabar, Zablestan, THE GREATEST PART OF INDIA, &c. &c.”

To Halaku, surnamed Il Khan, the grandson of Gengis, and founder of their monarchy, in Persia, we owe the astronomical tables of Nasireddin, called from him Ilkhanian. He built a magnificent observatory, at Maragha, in Persia, and invited thither all the great astronomers of his time, to observe the motions of the heavenly bodies. Gazan Khan, his sixth successor, caused the history of the Moguls and Tartars to be written by his wazir, or vizier, Fadlallah; and Abufaid Khan, the Great, devoted to literary pursuits the whole of that time which was not engrossed by the immediate concerns of the empire.

By Timur Bec, and his descendants, the same flame was cherished inviolate; or rather, in this line of Eastern conquerors, it broke forth with renovated strength and lustre. Of the truth of this assertion, I have already given a conspicuous proof in Ulug Beg; with whom may be classed the illustrious Shahroc, and his son, the Sultan Ibrahim, who founded at Shiras a noble college, with ample endowments, for the reward and encouragement of literature. The conduct of his posterity, who sat on the throne of India, through every period of their empire, while that empire existed in its vigour, afforded the most ample and honourable testimonies, that in them the hallowed spark remained still unextinguished.

But to return to the more immediate events of this history. Having taken rather an extensive retrospect of the rise, decline, and fall, of the Gaznavide, the Gauride, and Charazmian, empires, whose respective sovereigns, for more than two centuries, gave law to India; that is, from the first invasion of Sultan Mahmud, in the year 1000, to the defeat of Gelaleddin, by Gengis Khan, on the banks of the Indus, in 1221 of our æra,—having
noticed

noticed the principal events in the life of that celebrated conqueror, and traced the history of his successors down to Timur Bec, I shall direct my attention to a particular review of the domestic history of India, during that period of about 180 years, and chiefly from Herbelot and Ferishta, the latter of whom seems to supply the historical chasm of about ninety years, which the former declares he could not find materials to fill up, I shall record the history of what Mr. Orme calls the first dynasty of Mahomedan kings of Delhi. This dynasty of Afghan emperors, commencing in the person of Cothbeddin-Ibek,† or rather Iletmische, and ending in Mahmud, dethroned by Timur, will carry us down to the year 1398, in which year that great founder of the Mogul empire, in India, erected the Tartarian standard on the imperial towers of Delhi. "There are two celebrated histories," says Sir W. Jones,* "of the life of Tamerlane; one in Persian, the other in Arabic; both of them written with all the pomp and elegance of the Asiatic style: in the first, the Tartarian Conqueror is represented as a liberal, benevolent, and illustrious, prince; in the second, as deformed and impious, of a low birth and detestable principles. It seems difficult, at first, to reconcile this contradiction; but the difficulty vanishes,

† Called, in Ferishta, Cuttub-ul-dien and Altumsh.

* Preface to Nadir Shah. The reader will observe, that I take every possible opportunity of quoting this book, which I do for two reasons: first, because it is truly valuable and extremely scarce; and, secondly, because my esteem for the learned author is great, almost to veneration, having been early honoured with his friendship and patronage at University College; a college which has had the singular good fortune to furnish India with two Judges of the Supreme Court of Judicature of Bengal, Sir Robert Chambers and Sir William Jones.

when we learn, that great part of the Persian history was composed under the inspection of Tamerlane himself, and received only the polish of language from the pen of Ali Yezdi; and that the Arabian author bore the most inveterate hatred against that monarch." By Ali Yezdi, Sir W. means Sherifeddin, who was thus called from Yezd, a city of Persia, where he was born; and by the Arabian author, Ebn Arabshah, of whom the learned Golius gave an edition, in Arabic, and M. Vazier, a French version. The impartial historian, however, can only collect the truth from a diligent attention to both histories; and it is my intention to give the substance of each, on the leading traits of his character.

It seems surprizing, considering the importance of the subject, that so scanty a memoir, relative to the great event of Timur's invasion, and of the route pursued by that conqueror, from Delhi to the Straits of Kupele, is inserted in the Indian history of Ferishta. In the first edition of that book, it was still more obscure; but the editor in the second edition has judiciously extended the account from the history of Timur Bec. Of the work now offered to the public, this portion will necessarily be not the least interesting. To render it, at once, satisfactory and perspicuous, entertaining and instructive, the author means to bestow upon it the most assiduous and laborious attention. What historian, indeed, can avoid being animated, whilst he reviews the mighty exploits of the great Timur, and records acts of generosity and valour, without parallel, in the ample page of history. From the military maxims by which the Tartars were guided in carrying on war, though those acts were some-
times

times stained with a tinge of barbarity, yet Timur far surpassed both Alexander and Cæsar, as well in the vast extent of his empire as in the boundless diffusion of his munificence. I feel an ardent desire of public applause inkindled in my mind, and I am impatient to plunge into this most interesting and splendid period of Asiatic history. But, before I can arrive at its commencement, a tedious and barren waste must be toiled over; and, indeed, from the death of Timur, till the expulsion of Baber by the Uzbeks, great and almost insuperable difficulties will again arise, in the attempt to preserve the connecting chain of history between his descendants, who reigned in Grand Tartary, and the Princes of Indostan. All that we know for certain, from the few scanty and precarious fragments of history in our possession, chiefly to be found in Texeira, Herbelot, and the continuation of Arabshah's life of Timur, is, that the Indian dominions were, in some degree, dependent on the Tartar emperors, who, to over-awe those distant provinces, constantly kept a numerous body of cavalry at Gazna, or Candahar, at all times ready to exact the tribute, to extinguish the flame of rising rebellion, and pour, when necessary, their vengeance on that devoted country. For the clearer elucidation of the domestic history of India, during this period, Ferishta will be of great and important advantage. Timur appointed no regular king to govern Indostan; but by this author we are informed, that Chizer, whom he had stationed in the Souba of Multan, and its dependencies, rose by degrees, after the destruction of the weak Mahmud, and his weaker successor, Ladi, to the imperial dignity, and founded another dynasty of Patan

kings of Delhi. This dynasty flourished, with little interruption from the Tartar monarchs, from the death of Timur, in 1405, till the fifth invasion of Indostan, by the great, the politic, the immortal, Baber, whose checquered life was equally distinguished by glory and misfortune; and who, in a pitched battle, in the year 1526, totally defeated Sultan Ibrahim Ladi, at the head of an army of 100,000 Afghans. Baber, more justly than Timur, may be called the genuine founder of the Mogul dynasty, in India; as from him, in regular lineal succession, descended that glorious race of kings, who governed India, for the space of near two centuries, with wisdom unequalled, with moderation unprecedented, and with justice unimpeachable.

Baber was not less eminent as a scholar than as a warrior: he wrote the Commentaries of his own life and actions, called *Vakeat Baberi*, mentioned in Fraser's catalogue of oriental manuscripts; containing, says that gentleman, "a full account of his battles in Tartary and India; a correct description of India; the soil, climate, and manners of the people; a list of the several powers who then possessed India, &c. &c." From this book, originally written in the Mogul language, but translated into Persian, in the reign of Acbar, by Khan Khanan, Ferishta professes to have taken his history of this illustrious character, who mounted the throne of the Tartarian empire at twelve years old, and lived to see the new empire, which he had founded in Indostan, established in peace and rising in renown. If Ferishta has been faithful to his original, I cannot follow a better guide; and shall, therefore, at this period attend very closely to the text of that author. The *Vakeat Baberi* is among the manuscripts

at

at Oxford, and this is the only abstract of its contents generally known to the public.

Pursuing the regular course of our history, and referring constantly to the dates of Fraser, as the most accurate chronological statement of Indian events in our possession, after Baber, the chequered life of Homaion, distinguished, in a great degree, like that of Baber, by alternate triumph and depression, will engage our attention. In this life of Homaion, and in those of Shire Shah, Selim, Mahommed, and Ibrahim, three successive monarchs of Patan extraction, who usurped the Mogul throne, I shall have occasion once more to compare Ferishta with the Persian history, as it was entirely owing to the vigorous assistance of Tahmas, the Persian monarch, to whom Homaion, in his misfortune, fled, that the royal exile was enabled to recover possession of the empire of Timur, or rather of his father Baber. As about this period the affairs of the peninsula of India, and the settlement of the Europeans on its coast, will more immediately come under consideration, “the Portuguese Asia” of De Faria, the most respectable historian on the subject, will be principally consulted; and, indeed, that work will considerably elucidate the history of the emperors themselves. I take this opportunity of informing the encouragers of this work, that I mean, from the best and most impartial writers, to present to the view of the reader, at the end of each emperor’s reign, a concise, but authentic history, of the gradual rise, to eminence and power, of all those European nations, who successively established themselves under those emperors in India, from the first landing of the Portuguese, at Culicut, to the present day. I shall be particularly attentive to mark the gradations by which the *Honourable East India Company*

of England have risen to their present exalted state of power and splendour in that country; and I solemnly assure the honourable court of directors, whose patronage I solicit, that nothing dictated by party-consideration shall find its way into these sheets; but, that I will inviolably follow the duty of an impartial narrator, and religiously adhere to the grand outlines of historical truth.

The whole life of the illustrious hero, who succeeded Homaion, is a continued series of great and shining events. The annals of Acbar may be justly styled the annals of glory. Equally great in the council, and in the field, the zealous patron of genius, and the munificent rewarder of literary merit, he sat on the throne of Indostan, which he ascended at the early age of thirteen, during a period of fifty years, the most splendid in the history of the Mogul dynasty. The life of Acbar, in *Ferishta*, is a professed translation of the "Acbar Namma," written by Abul Fazil, secretary to that emperor, the most elegant writer of India. I have not contented myself, however, with only selecting the most valuable passages of *Ferishta*, to illustrate his reign, but have taken a more extensive range than usual; and trust that I have concentrated, into one point of view, whatever, relative to Acbar, is to be found in the historians and travellers of the last century, or of the present, that can at all be considered as important, or worthy of that distinguished and immortal character.

With the life of Acbar, the Indian history of *Ferishta* concludes; but Mr. Dow, to his translation of that author, added a third volume, which, either from accident, or the public avidity in purchasing it, is not now to be obtained. In this third volume he asserts, that he has abridged the substance of six oriental biographers, who
respectively

respectively wrote concerning the histories* of Jehangir, Shah Jehan, and Aurengzeb; and I shall extract largely from it, for the gratification of those readers, who have not the good fortune to have the original volume in their possession. From this authentic source, our information, in regard to the history of those emperors, will be obtained; but I shall not neglect any opportunity of improving my work, whensoever improvement can possibly be derived from a diligent perusal of those celebrated travellers, English and foreign, who, in the 17th century, successively visited the internal parts of the continent of India, either in private or in public stations. Of these, among ourselves, the best informed, and the most authentic, are Sir Thomas Herbert, Sir Thomas Roe, and his chaplain, Dr. Terry; and, among foreigners, the most distinguished are Bernier, Thevenot, and Tavernier. How far these authors, so frequently mentioned, and so often referred to in all publications, relative to India, may deserve attention and credit, in their respective accounts, it may not be useless, in an introduction to a work of this kind, to enquire.

Sir Thomas Roe was sent to India, at the request of the East-India Company, in quality of ambassador, from James the First to the Great Mogul, for the express purpose of establishing a friendly and commercial intercourse between the two nations. He was the first instance of an English ambassador's being sent to a remote Eastern court, and he executed his commission, as appears by his journal, with zeal and fidelity. The equipage and presents,

* Two of these histories, Vakeat Ichanguiry and Allumgire Namma, are in Fraser's catalogue.

which

which Sir Thomas carried out to India, were, by no means, suited to the exalted station he filled, the dignity of the sovereign from whom he came, or the grandeur of the court he visited. The account, given in that journal, of the inconceivable magnificence of the court of Delhi, at that period, is really astonishing. "On his birth-day the Mogul was sitting, cross-legged, on a little throne, all covered with diamonds, pearls, and rubies. Before him was a table of burnished gold, and on it were about fifty pieces of gold plate, all set with jewels, some very large, and extremely rich."—He represents "his sword and buckler as entirely covered with diamonds and rubies, and his belt of gold, suitably adorned;—his rich turban, decorated with lofty heron's feathers; on one side, pendant, a ruby, unset, as big as a walnut; on the other side, a diamond as large; in the middle, an emerald, still larger, in the form of a heart;—his staff, wound about with a chain of great pearl, rubies, and diamonds, drilled;—round his neck, a chain of three strings, of most excellent pearl, suspended;—his arms and wrists glittering with diamond bracelets; and, on each finger, a ring of inestimable value, &c. &c." As Sir T. Roe's journal is little known, because only to be met with in the large collections of Harris and Churchill, I shall hereafter gratify my readers with very ample extracts from this valuable performance. It is valuable also in other respects, as it exhibits a picturesque display of Indian and Mahomedan manners; though I must again repeat, that all accounts of the Hindoo laws and religion are entirely superseded by the more modern and correct statements of Mr. Holwell, Mr. Dow, and Mr. Halhed. Sir T. Roe continued three years at Delhi, from 1615 to 1618, was in high favour with the emperor,

emperor, and, notwithstanding the meanness of his appearance and presents, which consisted of "a coach, virginals, some knives, an embroidered scarf, and a sword," was honoured at his departure with a present, from the king, of a goblet and cover of gold, which weighed together about twenty ounces, and were set round with above two thousand precious stones of different magnitude and lustre.*

This great personage was accompanied, in the capacity of chaplain to this embassy, by Dr. Edward Terry, a man of considerable learning, of an inquisitive turn of mind and some facetiousness, who likewise published a relation of what he had heard and seen "within the rich and most spacious empire of the Great Mogul." The great feature of national character among the Hindoos remaining from age to age unalterable, if once truly represented, the picture must hold for ever good; and, except in the grand points above alluded to, never was a juster portrait drawn than this by Terry. For this reason his account still possesses a great share of that reputation it originally enjoyed; and, as a proof of this assertion, it has been very lately reprinted in octavo. Considering that it was written near two centuries ago, the style cannot be called deficient in elegance, while its erudition improves and its lively fallies delight the reader.

Thomas Herbert, Esq. afterwards rewarded, for his loyal adherence to Charles I. in his misfortunes, with a baronetage, travelled many years at the expence of his patron and relation, William Earl of Pembroke, in Persia and

* Sir Thomas Roe's Journal forms the last article in the first volume of Churchill's Collection, third edition.

India. He was in India during a part of the reign of Shah Jehan, whose history, together with that of his two predecessors on the throne, he gives at some length. He collected information with diligence and reported with fidelity; but his account cannot be expected to be so accurate as that of the former in regard to Jehan Ghir, since he had not an equal opportunity of acquiring genuine information. Sir Thomas Herbert's travels were printed in small folio with cuts, and the early editions are common and of little value: the fourth edition, printed, in 1677, with considerable additions, is scarce; but the most valuable portion is inserted in the second volume of Harris's collection. There are, besides these, many other English writers on the subject, particularly Mr. Finch and Dr. Fryer, who deserve, and shall have, that attention to which their respective works entitle them.

The same cause, which has preserved the page of Terry from oblivion, has operated likewise to prevent the accounts concerning India, given by the French writers of the last century, Thevenot, Tavernier, and Bernier, from becoming altogether useless or obsolete. They are, therefore, still occasionally referred to even by the most respectable writers, especially Bernier, whose curious and entertaining account of part of the Mogul empire, of the cities of Delhi and Agra, and of his journey to Cashmere with the emperor Aurengzeb, in whose suit he travelled as physician to the court, fails not, on every fresh reading, to give new pleasure. On the subject of this book we perfectly agree with Mr. Cambridge, that it is far more proper to recommend the entire perusal of it, than to transcribe partial abstracts, as the whole is so replete with instruction

struction and amusement. Sir William Jones, to whose decisions on these matters every man must look up with reverence, and by which, whensoever attainable, I shall be anxious to abide in the conduct of this work, confirms the above favourable opinion of the ingenious Bernier. In a future description, however, which will hereafter be given of those famous capitals when flourishing in their glory, I must necessarily be obliged to him, as no other writer is so accurate and circumstantial in the relation of their various antiquities and curiosities. Indeed, few Eastern travellers have ever been admitted to so familiar an intimacy with a prince of India as Bernier enjoyed; since he resided twelve years at the court of Delhi, and attended his imperial protector on every expedition of importance during that period.

Thevenot, who filled the conspicuous station of librarian to the king of France, though the diligent and faithful compiler of a most respectable collection of authentic "Voyages and Travels," never in person extended his researches eastward beyond the countries bordering on the Levant. Bernier, however, pays him a high and just compliment, by saying, in his ninth and last letter from India, that the "illustrious Thevenot daily gives more information to the world, without going out of his study, than can be learned of most that have gone round it."

Bernier was a scholar and a philosopher, and travelled into the East to increase that store of knowledge with which his mind abounded. Tavernier was a merchant, and travelled to accumulate a fortune. Both amply succeeded in the object they had in view; and the latter returned to his native country laden with some of the finest diamonds

of

of the East, many of which he disposed of to the king of France, (Louis XIV.) and, as a reward for his laborious diligence and instructive narrative, was ennobled by that monarch. His account of the places, which he personally visited, is undoubtedly authentic; but, like our English Hanway, his simplicity was frequently imposed upon, and Dr. Hyde, in his famous treatise *De Religione veterum Persarum*, accuses him of plagiarism, and particularises the author, Gabriel de Chinon, who had lived in Persia thirty years, from whose book he had so largely and so disreputably stolen. His account of the immense riches displayed in the imperial thrones and regalia of India, of whose real value, from his knowledge of gems of every kind, he must have been a competent judge, I shall insert in the life of Shah Jehan, who was himself, as Tavernier confesses, the most skilful in jewels of any man in his own vast empire. The relation of his travels into Golconda and Visapore, with the description of the mines they contain, may be also safely transcribed, as its authenticity may be relied upon, and as it is valuable from his having been the first European traveller who visited them, and penetrated so far into those then-unconquered kingdoms of the peninsula.

The following particular account of the famous peacock imperial throne will exhibit a specimen of the accuracy of Tavernier in describing the unequalled splendor and magnificence of those regalia. See *Tav. part II. book II. chap. VIII.*

“ The Great Mogul has seven thrones, some set all over with diamonds; others, with rubies, emeralds, and pearls. This is the largest throne, and is set up in the hall of the first court of the palace; it is, in form, like one of our field-

field-beds, six foot long and four broad. The cushion, at the back, is round, like a bolster; the cushions on the sides are flat. I counted about a hundred-and-eight pale rubies in collets about this throne, the least whereof weighed a hundred carats; but there are some that weigh two hundred. Emeralds, I counted about a hundred-and-forty, that weighed some threescore, some thirty, carats.

“ The under part of the canopy is all embroidered with pearls and diamond, with a fringe of pearls round about. Upon the top of the canopy, which is made like an arch with four panes, stands a peacock, with his tail spread, consisting entirely of sapphires and other proper coloured stones: the body is of beaten gold enchased with several jewels; and a great ruby upon his breast, to which hangs a pearl that weighs fifty carats. On each side of the peacock stand two nosegays, as high as the bird, consisting of various sorts of flowers, all of beaten gold enamelled. When the king seats himself upon the throne, there is a transparent jewel, with a diamond appendant of eighty or ninety carats weight, encompassed with rubies and emeralds, so hung that it is always in his eye. The twelve pillars also, that uphold the canopy, are set with rows of fair pearl, round, and of an excellent water, that weigh from six to ten carats apiece. At the distance of four feet, upon each side of the throne, are placed two umbrellas, the handles of which are about eight feet high, covered with diamonds; the umbrellas themselves being of crimson velvet, embroidered and fringed with pearl. This is the famous throne (he adds) which Tamerlane began and Shah Jehan finished; and is really reported to have cost a hundred-and-sixty millions and five-hundred thousand
livres

livres of our money. Besides this stately and magnificent throne, there is another less, of an oval form, seven foot long and five broad. The outside of it shines all over with diamonds and pearls, but there is no canopy over it. The five other thrones are erected in another magnificent hall, in a different court, entirely covered with diamonds without any coloured stone."

Aurengzeb, who died in the year 7 of this century, left the richest and most powerful empire in the world to be rent asunder and convulsed to its very center by the ambitious contentions of his surviving offspring. India had not for ages seen two such immense armies assembled on her plains, as those which accompanied to the field his sons Azem Shah and Mahommed Mauzim, the rival competitors for his vacant throne. The black and aggravated crimes, by which the father himself ascended to empire, seem to have been avenged by heaven in the successive destruction of his immediate descendants.

From the death of the victorious Mauzim to the irruption from Persia, in 1738, there occurs a period of Indian history, the events of which it is painful to record,—a period deeply stained with blood, and marked by many progressive scenes of national calamity, the effect of that general anarchy and that uncontrolled spirit of faction which diffused itself among the omras at the court of Delhi. In my review of this period, I must principally be obliged to the concise, but authentic, narrative of Frazer. In the account, however of that irruption itself, I shall generally follow the relation given in the history of Nadir Shah* by

* It is perhaps necessary to inform those, who are not conversant with the book, that the life of Nadir Shah was translated by Sir W. Jones, at an early period of life, from a Persian MS. at the request of the king of Denmark, when he visited England.

Sir W. Jones, whose book impresses the mind with very different, and, probably, more just, sentiments of that celebrated warrior, than those which are generally entertained. The extracts I shall make from that book cannot fail of being acceptable to the reader, not only on account of the exalted station and character of the writer, but because the book itself, from an accident which destroyed a great part of the only impression with which the public was ever favoured, is now grown uncommonly scarce, and the original value is thereby greatly enhanced. From this melancholy æra, the page of the Mogul history hastens rapidly to its close, and the scene grows gradually darker, till at length it is extinguished in total and tenfold gloom. Indeed, of the Tartarian empire, in India, which flourished in its proudest zenith under the great Aurengzeb, it can hardly with propriety be said that it *gradually declined*: for, as no succeeding emperor arose, endowed with the same great military talents to defend, and animated by the same enlarged views of policy to govern, its vast extent, that empire may, with more precision, be represented as rushing at once, by its own enormous weight, into general and irretrievable ruin. I have already dwelt too long, in the former part of this letter, on the events that immediately succeeded the invasion of Nadir Shah: it will be sufficient in this place to add, that what was begun by the avaricious Nadir was finally completed by the ferocious Abdollah, who, after plundering the treasury of his master, led back his insatiable Afghans to Delhi to divide the remaining spoil, and riot on the refuse of the feast. In the general plunder the Marattas and the Rohillas (another tribe of Afghans) have since largely participated, and, at this day, hardly a vestige remains of that mighty empire,

E which

which was founded by the illustrious Timur, and established by the persevering fortitude of Baber; which derived its most permanent basis of glory from the wise regulations of Acbar, and was carried to its greatest extent by the sword of the dauntless and politic Aurengzeb.

In contemplating the various and astonishing revolutions which have, within the last fifty years, taken place throughout the whole continent of India, a wide and almost boundless range is opened to the historian. The principal events, so interesting and multifarious, that are comprised within this period, and have led to those revolutions, I shall endeavour to record with fidelity, and to arrange in a regular and connected manner. Amidst the necessary abridgement of so vast a mass of historical information, perspicuity will be my chief aim, and I have spared neither labour nor expence to procure authentic documents. But, above all, gentlemen, in my relation of the transactions of the **BRITISH IN INDIA**, it will be my highest ambition to preserve the character of an unbiassed and impartial historian, totally free from the violence of either party, without the temporising servility that disgusts, and the intemperate warmth that offends. It is my fixed resolution to adhere solely to the grand outlines of *historical truth*, by whose awful dictates I mean on all occasions inflexibly to abide: all other influence the historian should disdain, all other praise is far below his notice. But, perhaps, it will be asked, — where, in the present state of affairs, is that truth to be found? I answer, — in a diligent investigation and comparison of the most distinguished authors who have written on either side, and by judicious extracts selected with caution from their respective works; — in Mr. Orme, and many of the writers specified

cified in pages 13 and 14, but, principally, in the honest unbiassed judgement of the upright, the moderate, and the discerning, of all parties, whose opinions I shall ever be anxious to obtain, and of whose praise I am most zealously ambitious.

On this ground, gentlemen, and on this ground only, I solicit your protection, for a work which the author has already felt to be both arduous and expensive, far too arduous and expensive to be persevered in without that protection. Without a patron among the great and affluent, but not without friends among men of learning and integrity, I appeal, with some degree of confidence, to that *honourable board*, which has often extended its liberal indulgence to the laborious efforts of individuals, whose object has been the diffusion of knowledge among mankind, and the extension of the blessings derived from it. I have the honour to be,

Honourable Sirs,

Your obedient

Woodford,
Jan. 1, 1790.

and faithful humble servant,

THOMAS MAURICE.

* * * Subscriptions for the proposed work
are received by W. RICHARDSON, under
the Royal Exchange.

